UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/300
21 July 1995
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC/ENGLISH/
FRENCH/RUSSIAN/
SPANISH

Fiftieth session
Item 75 of the provisional agenda*

STRENGTHENING OF SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

		Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	2
II.	CONSIDERATION OF THE QUESTION OF THE STRENGTHENING OF SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION DURING THE FORTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY	2
III.	REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS	3
	Belarus	3
	Colombia	4
	France	4
	Lebanon	7
	Russian Federation	8

* A/50/150.

95-21908 (E) 310795

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 49/81 of 15 December 1994, the General Assembly encouraged all States of the Mediterranean region to promote genuine openness and transparency in all military matters, particularly by participating in the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures as well as by providing accurate data and information to the Register of Conventional Arms. It also invited those States to address, through various forms of cooperation, problems and threats posed to the region, such as terrorism and criminal acts, as well as illegal drug production, consumption and trafficking. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on means to strengthen security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region.

2. With a view to facilitating the preparation of such a report, the Secretary-General addressed notes verbale to all Member States requesting their views on the matter.

3. As at 11 July 1995, five Governments have replied to the notes verbale of the Secretary-General and their responses are reproduced in section III below. Any replies or notifications received subsequently will be published as addenda to the present report.

II. CONSIDERATION OF THE QUESTION OF THE STRENGTHENING OF SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION DURING THE FORTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

4. The First Committee held a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, including item 68 on the strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region; the report on its consideration of the item is contained in document A/49/705.

5. During the general debate, several Member States, including Algeria, Cyprus, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta and Tunisia, addressed issues related to security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. While pointing out the different sources of instability and calling for initiatives and action, all sought to encourage efforts that would make the Mediterranean region a centre of peace, security, development and economic prosperity.

6. The draft resolution on the item (A/C.1/49/L.47/Rev.2) was introduced by Algeria on behalf of the sponsors, which included almost all the coastal States of the Mediterranean. The sponsors were Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Mauritania, Monaco, Morocco, Portugal, San Marino, Spain and Tunisia.

7. In introducing the revised draft resolution on behalf of its sponsors, the representative of Algeria pointed out that the increase in the number of sponsors compared with the previous year was a perfect illustration of the state

of mind in most Mediterranean countries and of their willingness to work together to strengthen cooperation and security in the Mediterranean basin.

8. The representative of Algeria pointed out that the draft resolution differed from previous resolutions in that it dealt with a broader range of questions relating to security and cooperation in the Mediterranean. He added that, having taken into account the prevalent dynamics of peace in the region, the sponsors wanted to express their sincere desire to give fresh impetus to their multifaceted relations so as to bolster the climate of confidence and security that was essential if the Mediterranean was to be a lake of peace and cooperation (see A/C.1/49/PV.21).

9. While the General Assembly would bear in mind all the initiatives taken by the Mediterranean countries, it would also reaffirm their primary role. The Assembly would recognize the indivisible character of security in the Mediterranean and the determination of the Mediterranean countries to intensify the process of dialogue and consultations, with a view to resolving the problems existing in the region, eliminating the causes of tension and fostering closer European-Mediterranean cooperation.

10. In the operative part of the draft resolution, the provisions that encouraged riparian States to continue their efforts to remove all obstacles to the promotion of confidence-building and disarmament measures in order to establish a climate of peace, security, stability and prosperity in the Mediterranean region had been strengthened.

11. In view of the new dynamic motivating most of the coastal States of the Mediterranean region, the sponsors were confident that the resolution enjoyed the support of all the members of the First Committee and called for it to be adopted without a vote. The General Assembly adopted the draft resolution without a vote as resolution 49/81.

III. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

BELARUS

[Original: English]

[6 July 1995]

The pertinent ministerial bodies of Belarus support the efforts envisaged in General Assembly resolution 49/81 and aimed at developing various forms of international cooperation in crime prevention and elimination and has undertaken appropriate measures to that end. Thus, in January 1993, an Agreement was signed on cooperation between the Ministry of the Interior of Belarus and the Ministry of the Interior of Italy in the field of transfer of illicit drugs and psychotropic substances along the "Balkan road" and for computerized data exchange. A meeting between the Ministers of the Interior of Belarus and Italy, held at Rome in May 1993 during the international conference on European drug transfer, resulted in the signing of an inter-ministerial agreement on

cooperation in combating the transfer of illicit drugs and psychotropic substances and organized crime.

COLOMBIA

[Original: Spanis

[20 April 1995]

1. Colombia believes that the evolution of international relations requires that a new, realistic approach be taken to the problems of global security. Such an approach must be based on an integrated concept encompassing both the principles governing relations among States and those concerning respect for human life.

2. Colombia supports the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security and the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as well as activities to strengthen security in the various regions and cooperation on matters of common interest to the States of given region.

3. Colombia therefore supports the determination of the Mediterranean countries to strengthen their security, eliminate causes of tension, promote confidence-building measures and work for international cooperation, particularly in the economic, social, humanitarian and environmental spheres.

FRANCE*

[Original: Frenc

[31 May 199

1. The European Union recalls its common replies contained in documents A/48/514/Add.1 and A/49/333. The Union reiterates the principal elements set forth in those documents and wishes to add the following comments.

2. The European Union is convinced that current security and cooperation problems in the Mediterranean region demand a multi-disciplinary approach. Moreover, the complexity of the issues necessitates a comprehensive and concerted initiative allowing each specific problem to be addressed separately.

3. The European Union is of the view that relations among the Mediterranean countries should be such as to guarantee the prosperity and stability of the countries concerned and gradually make the region an area for exchanges and dialogue. But that can come about only through political dialogue, sustained

---

* On behalf of the States members of the European Union.

and balanced socio-economic development, the eradication of poverty and broader understanding among the various cultures.

4. For the Mediterranean to become a common area of peace and stability the following fundamental principles must be respected: equality and sovereignty, non-interference, respect for territorial sovereignty, renunciation of the use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the establishment of good-neighbourliness as well as of confidence-building and security measures. The establishment of this common area will also necessitate a joint effort to combat terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking, as well as the attainment of disarmament and non-proliferation objectives in compliance with the principles of international law and the resolutions of the United Nations, taking into account proposals for regional demilitarization.

5. The European Union has encouraged several initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue and cooperation between the two shores of the Mediterranean, not only in the context of the Union's foreign policy but also in other forums and organizations to which the members of the Union belong. In the field of security, the Western European Union, the defence component of the European Union, has, since 1992, provided a framework for dialogue with the southern littoral States in pursuance of two objectives: contributing to stability in the region through direct contacts for the exchange of information and views on issues involving mutual security and other interests; and complementing, in the area of security, their political and economic relations with the European Union. This dialogue (in which five North African countries are already participating and which could be extended to others in the future) reflects a global concept of security and is designed to bring about greater mutual awareness and understanding, thereby diminishing the possibility of mistaken perceptions of threats.

6. The members of the European Union are also participating in other Mediterranean-focused initiatives to promote dialogue. In the framework of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Budapest Summit in December 1994 gave new impetus to relations with non-participating Mediterranean countries by offering the latter new opportunities to cooperate in the work of the organization on issues likely to affect the region as a whole. Further, experience gained in the context of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)/OSCE could prove useful as a possible complement to the cultural and religious aspects of different local societies in the establishment of a more open dialogue in the region. In addition, the Mediterranean Forum began its work in June 1994 in an informal meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the 10 countries on the two shores of the Mediterranean, followed by a further meeting in April 1995. At this most recent meeting, the Forum objective of promoting political, economic and regional cultural cooperation was reaffirmed. The Mediterranean Forum has also demonstrated its usefulness by making a significant contribution to other forums, such as the initiative on a Euro-Mediterranean partnership. In the framework of the Atlantic alliance, preliminary contacts have been made with the littoral States of the southern Mediterranean with a view to establishing a dialogue on security issues that would promote an atmosphere of greater understanding and, thereby, regional stability.

7. In the sphere of disarmament and non-proliferation, the European Union welcomes the decision taken at the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on the unlimited extension of the Treaty and the fact that the decision was adopted without a vote. The Union invites all the States of the region to honour their commitments as signatories to agreements on arms control and disarmament and invites all Mediterranean States that have not yet done so to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty. This invitation also extends to chemical weapons, so that the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction can, as soon as possible, obtain the requisite number of new ratifications for its entry into force. The Union also supports efforts under way to provide the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction with a verification protocol, and encourages all States of the Mediterranean region to comply with the confidence-building measures agreed at the Third Review Conference of the latter Convention.

8. The European Union is convinced that improved transparency in military matters will promote stability in the Mediterranean region. The Union calls upon all the States of the region to submit to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms not only information on transfers of conventional weapons, including the "not applicable" responses which make a significant contribution to the success of the Register, but also to expand such information to include military holdings and procurement through national production, as stipulated in paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 46/36 L of 9 December 1991. The Union also strongly encourages all the States of the Mediterranean region to participate in the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures.

9. The creation of a zone of peace, stability and prosperity in the Mediterranean is clearly motivated by a determination to resolve the serious issues facing the littoral countries. The problem of terrorism was emphasized in the preparatory phase of the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean conference, and the importance of efforts to combat drug trafficking was recalled in paragraph 7 of the Essen Declaration on Mediterranean Policy of the European Council.

10. The strengthening of cooperation among the countries of the region on questions relating to terrorism would, inter alia, include increased exchanges of information, improved training for the services responsible for the prevention and elimination of terrorism, and assessment of the various components of terrorism.

11. Similarly, with respect to drug trafficking, the European Union advocates close cooperation of police and customs services based on exchanges of information; on greater awareness of the need to make use of advanced technology to detect suspicious shipments; on the establishment of coordinated and effective control of maritime traffic in the framework of international conventions and the strengthening of legal measures against drug trafficking; and on respect for the relevant international commitments.

12. The European Union is convinced that it is incumbent upon it as well as its Mediterranean partners to act together to turn the Mediterranean basin into, more than at present, an area for exchanges and dialogue in order to guarantee peace, stability and well-being for its peoples. In this spirit and in accordance with the strategies defined in the meetings of the European Council at Lisbon (June 1992), Corfu (June 1994) and Essen (December 1994), the European Union is resolved to define, in a spirit of partnership, a lasting framework for relations with the countries of the Mediterranean.

13. In furtherance of this aim, a Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference will be held at Barcelona on 27 and 28 November 1995 at which the European Union and its partners in the western and eastern Mediterranean will jointly define their future relations. Participation in the conference will include the States members of the European Union as well as the Mediterranean countries institutionally associated with the European Union, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Malta and Cyprus, and the Palestinian Authority.

14. The aim of the conference is not to provide a specific forum for the settlement of any given conflict. Thus it will not interfere with ongoing regional initiatives such as the Middle East peace process. In Essen, the European Council very clearly specified that the aim of the conference was to initiate a permanent and regular dialogue. Thus, the Euro-Mediterranean conference could provide the foundation for a process of cooperation among the Mediterranean littoral States. In addition, it could serve as a mechanism for political dialogue among the participating States in order to define common principles and interests with respect to both their internal stability (State subject to the rule of law, human rights) and external stability (fundamental principles of good-neighbourliness among States, including general security questions). The Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean conference should, in particular, establish as an objective the promotion of political, economic and social initiatives intended to promote the harmonization of societies on the two shores of the Mediterranean basin, thus transcending the traditional dichotomy between development aid and mass migration.

LEBANON

[Original: Arabic]

[17 May 1995]

1. The Government of Lebanon agrees with paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 49/81 encouraging States to make known the details of their military expenditures and their levels of armament. It considers that this policy should cover all the States of the region, including Israel, and should also provide *for an inventory of the nuclear* and chemical weapons that Israel has introduced into the region in spite of the promises given by Israeli officials not to take the initiative in this matter. Paragraph 6 of the resolution is restricted to conventional weapons, but Lebanon considers there is no justification for this and that there should be an attempt to construct a comprehensive list of the arsenals of States.

2. Lebanon agrees with the provisions of paragraph 8 of the resclution relating to the dangers to which the peoples of the region are exposed from terrorist activities, provided there is a precise definition of what is meant by the word "terrorism", provided that such a definition includes an affirmation of the right of peoples to use military means to defend their sovereignty and in response to the occupation of their territory, and provided that it is clear that the definition of the word "terrorism" does not include the resistance operations in the South.

3. Lebanon agrees with the provisions of paragraph 8 concerning the necessity of cooperation to address the dangers arising from drug production, trafficking and consumption and thinks that attention should be drawn to the efforts of the countries of the region, including Lebanon, and to the results achieved by Lebanon in restricting the illegal activities, which had become worse during the war years.

4. Lebanon agrees with the provisions of paragraph 8 concerning the necessity of preserving fundamental freedoms and a democratic basis and protecting them from anything that might weaken or endanger them, provided that it is clear that occupation is one of these dangers and that its continuation threatens freedoms and democratic civilian life in Lebanon and other countries that have been exposed to aggression and occupation. It is also necessary to stress that non-compliance with United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, is a violation of fundamental rights and a weakening of the principles on which democratic societies are based.

5. Furthermore, the continued detention of Lebanese citizens in the Khiam prison camp without any legal justification constitutes an impediment to cooperation and security in the region, and it must be ended in order to facilitate cooperation for security in the Middle East region.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

[Original: Russian]

[15 June 1995]

1. The strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region is, in the view of the Russian Federation, one of the priority tasks of the international community.

2. The Russian Federation is closely bound to the Mediterranean region by historical, geopolitical, economic and cultural ties. It is with great satisfaction that we note the promising developments in the situation in the Mediterranean. Despite occasional disruptions, the Middle East peace process remains on a generally positive track, the dialogue between Europe and North Africa is being revitalized and economic cooperation among coastal States is growing. At the same time, however, favourable trends are alternating with a number of factors that are disturbing or threatening peace and stability. These include the acute crisis in the Balkans, the smouldering Cypriot problem, unresolved differences between Turkey and Greece, the periodic flare-up of

tension in the Middle East, the uncertain situation regarding the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, illegal migration, the growth of religious violence, which feeds on the alarming disparities between rich and poor in individual countries, and on lagging economic development in various States.

3. In order to strengthen security in the Mediterranean region and prevent any further erosion of stability there, a comprehensive approach is necessary, which would include parallel steps to eliminate hot spots, reduce military presence and develop regional cooperation on the basis of greater economic integration. In this connection, the elaboration and promotion of measures to build confidence among the countries of the Mediterranean are also of considerable importance. The Russian Federation continues to be in favour of a greater role for the United Nations in the mobilization of multilateral efforts to resolve common military, political, economic and humanitarian problems. In view of the timeliness of disarmament issues for the region, it might be appropriate to expand the debate on problems of disarmament in the Mediterranean region in the First Committee of the General Assembly.

4. An important political as well as geographic consideration is, in our view, the close interdependence of the Black Sea and Mediterranean Sea basins and the common interests of the States situated in this area in the settlement of regional problems. We believe that greater attention should be paid to the creation of mechanisms for integrating the region of the Black and Mediterranean seas.

5. The Russian Federation welcomes the process of intensification of ties between the countries of the Mediterranean region and States outside the region, which is in keeping with new realities and is gathering force. One aspect of this process is the establishment of a Mediterranean forum, in whose activities we would be prepared to participate as an observer. In our view, the United Nations could make a vital contribution to the stability of this process.

6. The 1991 proposal to convene a conference on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region should be developed and expanded. The "product" of such a conference might, in the initial stage, include voluntary commitments in the area of confidence-building measures, the creation of political mechanisms for monitoring the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the elaboration of rules and procedures covering the military and political aspects of security and environmental cooperation.